

Ovid

Amores. Elegy 1.4, "Amicam qua arte"

Vir tuus est epulas nobis aditurus eadem—
ultima coena tuo sit, precor, illa viro!
ergo ego dilectam tantum conviva puellam
adspiciam?

(ll. 1-4)

[...]

ante veni, quam vir—nec quid, si veneris ante,
possit agi video; sed tamen ante veni.
cum premet ille torum, vultu comes ipsa modesto
ibis, ut accumbas—clam mihi tange pedem!
me specta nutusque meos vultumque loquacem;
excipe furtivas et refer ipsa notas.
verba superciliis sine voce loquentia dicam;
verba leges digitis, verba notata mero.
cum tibi succurret Veneris lascivia nostrae,
purpureas tenero pollice tange genas.
siquid erit, de me tacita quod mente queraris,
pendeat extrema mollis ab aure manus.
cum tibi, quae faciam, mea lux, dicamve, placebunt,
versetur digitis anulus usque tuis.

(ll. 13-26)

[...]

nec femori committe femur nec crure cohaere
nec tenerum duro cum pede iunge pedem.
multa miser timeo, quia feci multa proterve,
exemplique metu torqueor, ecce, mei.

(ll. 43-46)

[...]

sed quaecumque tamen noctem fortuna sequetur,
cras mihi constanti voce dedisse nega!
(ll. 69-70)

Amores. Elegy 1.5 "Corrina Concubitus"

ecce, Corinna venit, tunica velata recincta,
candida dividua colla tegente coma—
qualiter in thalamos famosa Semiramis isse
dicitur, et multis Lais amata viris.
Deripui tunicam—nec multum rara nocebat;
pugnabat tunica sed tamen illa tegi.
quae cum ita pugnaret, tamquam quae vincere nollet,
victa est non aegre prodicione sua.
ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros,
in toto nusquam corpore menda fuit.
quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!
forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi!
quam castigato planus sub pectore venter!
quantum et quale latus! quam iuvenale femur!
Singula quid referam? nil non laudabile vidi
et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum.
Cetera quis nescit? lassique requievimus ambo.
proveniant medii sic mihi saepe dies!
(ll.9-26)

Your husband will be at the same supper with us—
Let that supper, I pray, be your husband's last!
Shall I be so close to a girl I love
And merely be a guest?

Come before your husband, why not, come before,
I don't see what's possible, but arrive before.
When he lies on the couch, look, with modest
demeanor to recline beside him—secretly touch my foot!
Look at me and my nods and my expressive face;
catch my secrets and return them.
Without saying a word, my eyebrows shall speak to thee;
words from my fingers, words traced in wine.
When you think of the pleasures of our love,
with a tender thumb touch your cheeks.
If you remember some silent complaint against me,
gently grasp the bottom of your ear with your hand.
When you are pleased, my light, with what I do or say,
fiddle with the ring on your finger.

Do not engage or touch him with the thigh
not the tip of the foot with his hard foot.
Alas, I fear much, because I have often been wanton,
Tormented, look you, by my own example.

Nevertheless, whatever proves the fortune of the night,
tomorrow, in a firm voice, deny that you gave yourself!
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Behold, Corinna comes, draped in a loose gown,
Hair parted over her white neck—
Just as Semiramis came to her bed,
so they say, and Lais loved by many men.
I tore off her coat—it was thin, and covered little;
But, she held the tunic, fighting to be covered,
fighting as if she would win,
or be conquered easily, though not by her own betrayal.
As she stood before my eyes with drapery set by,
she hadn't a flaw in her entire body.
What shoulders, what arms I saw and touched!
The form of her breasts, how fit to be caressed!
How flat is her belly, beneath her breasts!
The quantity and quality of her side! What a thrilling thigh!
Why refer to more? I saw nothing unpraiseworthy
and pressed her naked body against mine.
Who knows not what followed? Weary, we rested.
May such afternoons come for me often!
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Amores. Elegy 1.13 “Ad Auroram”

'Quo properas, Aurora? mane!—sic Memnonis umbris
annua sollempni caede parentet avis!
nunc iuvat in teneris dominae iacuisse lacertis;
si quando, lateri nunc bene iuncta meo est.
nunc etiam somni pingues et frigidus aer,
et liquidum tenui gutture cantat avis.
quo properas, ingrata viris, ingrata puellis?
(ll. 3-9)

[...]

optavi quotiens, ne nox tibi cedere vellet,
ne fugerent vultus sidera mota tuos!
optavi quotiens, aut ventus frangeret axem,
aut caderet spissa nube retentus equus!
(ll. 27-30)

[...]

Tithono vellem de te narrare liceret;
fabula non caelo turpior ulla foret.
illum dum refugis, longo quia grandior aevo,
surgis ad invisas a sene mane rotas.
at si, quem mavis, Cephalum complexa teneres,
clamares: "lente currite, noctis equi!"
Cur ego plectar amans, si vir tibi marcet ab annis?
(ll. 35-41)

'Where do you hurry, Aurora? Stay, so to Memnon's shades
his birds may make annual festival in combat!
Now I delight to lie in the tender arms of my mistress;
if at any time, now it is best that she lies close to me.
now, too, sleep is deep and the air is cold,
and slender-throated birds sing liquid songs.
Why do you hurry, unwelcome to men, unwelcome to girls?

often have I wished that night would not give place to thee,
so that the stars would not flee before your face!
often have I wished the wind would break your axle,
or that a thick cloud would trip and fell your horse!

I wish Tithonus were licensed to tell about you;
There is no more shameful story in heaven.
Fleeing from him, for he is so many ages older than you,
you rise early from the old man, to morning's chariot wheels.
Whereas, if you had your beloved Cephalus in your embrace,
then you would cry: "Run slowly, horses of the night!"
Why should I suffer in love because your husband is wasted with years?
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Amores. Elegy 3.4 “Ad virum servanem coniugem”

Dure vir, inposito tenerae custode puellae
nil agis; ingenio est quaeque tuenda suo.
siqua metu dempto casta est, ea denique casta est;
quae, quia non liceat, non facit, illa facit!
ut iam servaris bene corpus, adultera mens est;
nec custodiri, ne velit, ulla potest.
nec corpus servare potes, licet omnia claudas;
omnibus exclusis intus adulter erit.
(ll.1-8)

[...]

nitimur in vetitum semper cupimusque negata;
sic interdictis imminet aeger aquis.
centum fronte oculos, centum cervice gerebat
Argus—et hos unus saepe fefellit Amor;
in thalamum Danae ferro saxoque perennem
quae fuerat virgo tradita, mater erat;
Penelope mansit, quamvis custode carebat,
inter tot iuvenes intemerata procos.
Quidquid servatur cupimus magis, ipsaque furem
cura vocat; pauci, quod sinit alter, amant.
(ll.17-26)

[...]

Rusticus est nimium, quem laedit adultera coniunx,
et notos mores non satis urbis habet
in qua Martigenae non sunt sine crimine nati
Romulus Iliades Iliadesque Remus.
quo tibi formosam, si non nisi casta placebat?

Harsh husband, setting a guard over your tender girl
Gets you nothing; her own character is what will defend her.
If she is chaste when free from fear, then she is pure;
But if she doesn't sin because she's not allowed to, she'll do it!
Even if you have well guarded the body, the mind is adulterous;
no watchman has any power over her will.
Neither can you guard her body, though you close every door,
excluding all; for the adulterer will be within.

We strive for what is forbidden and desire what is denied;
Just as a sick man gazes over prohibited waters.
A hundred eyes before, a hundred behind, had
Argus—and these were often deceived only by Love;
in a chamber of of eternal iron and rock Danae was shut,
though she had been shut in as a maid, she became a mother;
Penelope remained steadfast, although without a guard,
Among many youthful suitors.
Whatever is guarded we desire the more, the thief
is invited by worry; few love what is permitted by another.

He is a rustic fool, who hurts over an adulterous wife,
and he surely doesn't know the ways of *this* city,
in which the sons of Mars were not born without crime,
Romulus, and Remus, Ilia's twins.
Why did you marry beauty if nothing but chastity would please you?

non possunt ullis ista coire modis.
Si sapis, indulge dominae vultusque severos
exue, nec rigidi iura tuere viri,
et cole quos dederit—multos dabit—uxor amicos.
gratia sic minimo magna labore venit;
sic poteris iuvenum convivia semper inire
et, quae non dederis, multa videre domi.
(ll.37-48)

Those two things can never be combined.
If you are wise, indulge your lady, and the stern looks?
Ditch them. Do not rigidly insist on the rights of a husband,
and cherish her very generous and loving . . . friends.
You will receive great thanks, and with little effort on your part;
So in this way, you can always celebrate and feast with youths,
and see many gifts at home which you did not give.
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Ars Amatoria. “Sed tu praecipue curvis venare theatris”

Primus sollicitos fecisti, Romule, ludos,
Cum iuivit viduos rapta Sabina viros.
Tunc neque marmoreo pendebant vela theatro,
Nec fuerant liquido pulpita rubra croco;
Illic quas tulerant nemorosa Palatia, frondes
Simpliciter positae, scena sine arte fuit;
In gradibus sedit populus de caespite factis,
Qualibet hirsutas fronde tegente comas.
Respiciunt, oculisque notant sibi quisque puellam
Quam velit, et tacito pectore multa movent.
[...]
Rex populo praedae signa petita dedit.
Protinus exiliunt, animum clamore fatentes,
Virginibus cupidas iniciuntque manus.
[...]
Siqua repugnarat nimium comitemque negabat,
Sublatam cupido vir tulit ipse sinu,
Atque ita 'quid teneros lacrimis corrumpis ocellos?'
Quod matri pater est, hoc tibi' dixit 'ero.'
Romule, militibus scisti dare commoda solus:
Haec mihi si dederis commoda, miles ero.
(1.101-10, 114-16, 127-32)

You first instituted these games, Romulus,
When the single Roman men raped the Sabine women.
Back then no awnings hung over a marble theatre,
Nor was the platform stained with red saffron;
There artless and thick Palatine branches
Were simply placed, while the stage was unadorned;
The audience sat on steps made from turf,
The branches covering their shaggy hair.
Each cast his eyes around, noting the girls
He wanted, and was deeply stirred in his silent heart.
[...]
The king gave the signal for the rape.
Immediately they leap up, their shouts betraying their
Virgins with greedy, lustful hands.
[...]
If a girl resisted too much, or refused her companion,
Lifted up on his lustful bosom the man carried her,
Saying, “And what’s that that ruins your eyes with tears?
What your father was to your mother, that will I be to you.”
Romulus, only you knew what was fitting:
If you give me such advantages, I will be a soldier too.
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Quid, modo cum belli navalis imagine Caesar

Quid, modo cum belli navalis imagine Caesar
Persidas induxit Cecropiasque rates?
Nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae
Venere, atque ingens orbis in Urbe fuit.
Quis non invenit turba, quod amaret, in illa?
Eheu, quam multos advena torsit amor!
(1.171-76)

When Caesar, in the manner of a naval battle,
Brought on Persian and Cecropian vessels?
Of course, the young men and girls came from both seas,
Venus, the mighty world was in our city.
Who did not find one they might love in that crowd?
Alas, how many were tortured by a foreign love!
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Sed tibi nec ferro placeat torquere capillos

Sed tibi nec ferro placeat torquere capillos,
Nec tua mordaci pumice crura teras.
Ista iube faciant, quorum Cybeleia mater
Concinitur Phrygiis exululata modis.
Forma viros neglecta decet. (1.505-9)
[...]
Nec male deformet rigidos tonsura capillos:
Sit coma, sit trita barba resecta manu.

But take no delight in curling your hair,
Nor in smoothing your legs with sharp pumice.
Leave that to those who celebrate Cybele the Mother,
Chanting and howling in Phrygian measures.
For men a slight neglect is best:
Don't your stubborn hair be ruined by a bad cut;
Let your hair and beard be trimmed by a skilled hand.

Et nihil emineant, et sint sine sordibus ungues:
Inque cava nullus stet tibi nare pilus.
Nec male odorati sit tristis anhelitus oris:
Nec laedat naris virque paterque gregis.
Cetera lascivae faciant, concede, puellae,
Et si quis male vir quaerit habere virum.
(1.517-24)

Do not let your nails protrude, and make sure they're not dirty:
There should be no hair sprouting from your nostrils.
No evil odors should come from the breath of your mouth:
Nor should you offend the nose like a herdsman and his flock.
The rest, concede to lascivious wanton girls,
And any man who seeks to find a husband.
(Trans. M. Bryson)

Nec timide promitte: trahunt promissa puellas

Nec timide promitte: trahunt promissa puellas;
Pollicito testes quoslibet adde deos.
Iuppiter ex alto periuria ridet amantum,
Et iubet Aeolios inrita ferre notos.
(1.631-33)
[...]
Reddite depositum; pietas sua foedera servet:
Fraus absit; vacuas caedis habete manus.
Ludite, si sapitis, solas impune puellas.
(1.641-43)

Do not be shy of promising: promises entice girls:
Call all the gods you please as witnesses.
Jupiter from on high laughs at lovers' perjuries,
And bids Aeolus' winds cancel them and carry them away.

Return what is lent you; Keep faith with your friends:
Stay far from fraud; and keep your hands clear of blood.
Play, but if you're wise, cheat only girls with impunity.
(Trans. M. Bryson)